The Cost of a Crown.

Robert Hugh Benson

ST. MARY'S
COLLEGE
OAKLAND, - CAL.

Teaching School, Saint Mary's
Brothers of the Christian Schools
Marin County, California

Redwing School, Saint Vincents
Brothers of the Christian Schools
Marin County, California

THE COST OF A CROWN

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

A MYSTERY PLAY IN HONOUR OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS, APPENDICES, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS

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Venerable John Bost. M.

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The COST *of* A CROWN

A STORY OF DOUAY & DURHAM

A SACRED DRAMA IN THREE ACTS

WITHDRAWN

BY

ROBERT HUGH BENSON

AUTHOR OF "A MYSTERY PLAY," ETC.

Saint Vincent's Marin Co., Calif.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY

GABRIEL PIPPET

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

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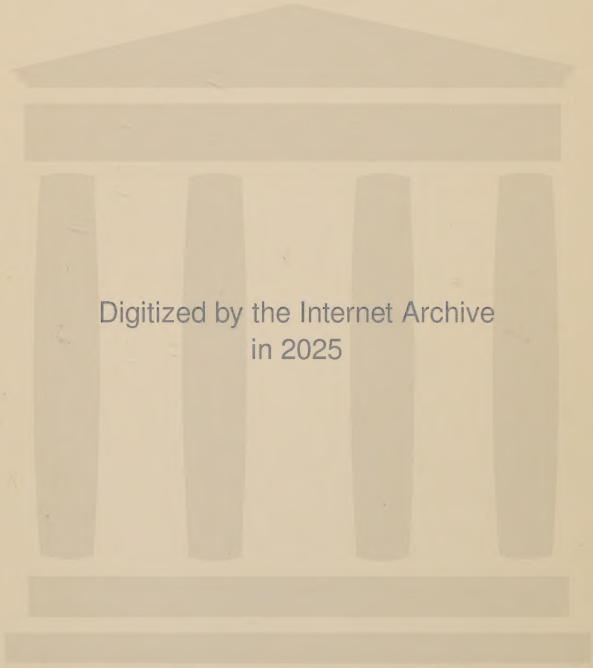
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PREFACE

THE following play was written on the invitation of the late Dr. Wilkinson, Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, for the occasion of the Centenary of St. Cuthbert's College, Ushaw; the music was composed by Mr. Sewell, now sub-organist of Westminster Cathedral; and the whole was performed in the presence of the Archbishop of Westminster and many of the Bishops of England, in July 1908, by the students of Ushaw, under the management of the Rev. Father Bonney.

The play itself, in all its essentials and most of its details, is in accordance with the facts of the Venerable John Bost's life and death; and in the Third Act, much of the dialogue is taken from a verbatim report of the trial. For the rest of the dialogue, care has been taken to follow, as far as possible, the spirit and temper of the time, as well as to represent as truly as possible the historical characters who appear upon the stage. The actual words of the death sentence have been modified.

In the First Act, all the persons represented are, with the exception of the Porter, historical figures. In the Second Act all the characters are historical, as also in the Third Act, with the exception of the Clerk and the neces-

sary supernumeraries. In the hunt for, and capture of, the martyr in the Second Act, care has been taken to follow accurately all the details, which have been minutely preserved.

Apologies are due for the comparative incoherence of the plot, and the long periods that elapse between the Acts; but these defects are, unfortunately, a necessity of the case.

As regards the costumes and scenic arrangements, these were made as much in accordance with historical accuracy as possible.

Grateful acknowledgments are due to Father Goldie's admirable articles on the martyr, published in the *Ushaw Magazine*, without which the play could not have been written.

R. H. B.

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5835

THE PERSONS OF THE PLAY

In Act I.

EVERARD HANSE (*a student*)	GERARD CLIBBORNE (*a student*).
JOHN BALLARD ,,	WILLIAM RICHMOND ,,
JOHN BOST ,,	GEORGE GRIMSTON ,,
JOHN PIBUSH ,,	VINCENT WARNER ,,
SAMUEL CONYERS ,,	JOHN GOUGHE ,,
EDMUND CATHERACKE ,,	

THE COLLEGE PORTER.

In Act II.

JOHN BOST.	FRANCIS EGLESFIELD.
THOMAS ROBINSON (*a servant*).	HENRY EWBANK (*a minister*).
RALPH BOWES (*a magistrate*).	OUTLAW (*a pursuivant*).
	FOUR PURSUIVANTS.

In Act III.

Lord HUNTINGDON.	CLERK OF THE COURT.
Justice BEAUMONT.	FOUR OFFICERS OF THE COURT.
Justice EWINGES.	
The BISHOP OF DURHAM.	ATTORNEYS.
JOHN BOST	LAWYERS.

CLERKS, &c.

The following prologue was delivered on the occasion of the performance of this play at the Centenary Celebration of St. Cuthbert's College, Ushaw.]

PROLOGUE

Masters and gentlemen, the time is here,
That we, now better than a hundred year,
Have flourished from that root which *Douay* gave,
Nourished by him, who, all to serve and save
His England, planted there so long ago;
Grown strong in *Rheims*—that sapling, fed below
By lives of men laid gladly down, above
Made fair by God His grace and Mary's love.
So, root and stem and flower, here *Ushaw* stands,
Planted in one, spread wide in many lands.
We then, on this our day (which pray God bless!)
Day of grave mirth and merry seriousness,
Present before your eyes, as best we may,
As in a glass, a tale of yesterday,
Of times when England, careless of her peace,
Quick to pick up a quarrel, slow to cease,
Like some self-maddened woman, swoll'n with pride,
Dashed from her lap her sons, and from her side
Those that but sought to serve her—yea, denied
Her own and very life that God had given
To nourish her on earth and guide her steps to heaven.
Ah! sad the days and times, yet glorious too;
For by that act that showed herself untrue
And spilt such noble blood, she sowed the seed
Of souls unborn to save her life indeed.

And such was he whose tale is told to-day,
Our hero-comrade, born and bred, they say,
In this north country—then, 'mid Oxford's towers,
Nourished his youth and spent his studious hours,
Saw visions, as old Joel speaks, dreamed dreams,
Till, won by grace, left all, and in dear *Rheims*,
Received his heart's desire (nor recked the cost)—
The crown of great Melchisedech which *Oxford* lost.
Thus then, for thirteen years, through weal and woe,
Through good repute and evil did he go,
In cot and castle, fared by field and flood,
To pour the fragrance of his Saviour's blood,
To plead the sacrifice of Christ our Lord,
And spread about the Gospel of His Word.

Then struck the hour, when, like his Lord, betrayed
To sinners' hands, he, like his Lord, was made
A very lamb of God; tormented sore,
Judged by injustice, pris'n and chains he bore;
Till, looking upwards to his heavenly crown,
Passing from death, his holy life laid down,
And, 'mid the thrones where scar-decked martyrs shine,
He reigns with Laurence and with Valentine.

This then our theme, pursued as best we may:
And you, my lords and gentlemen, we pray
To hear and see with patience as we show
This tale of holy joy and holier woe:
Follow with us the story of his strife,
His fears, his living death, his deathless life.
We do our best. Hear you with patience then.
And so God ✠ bless us always, one and all. Amen.

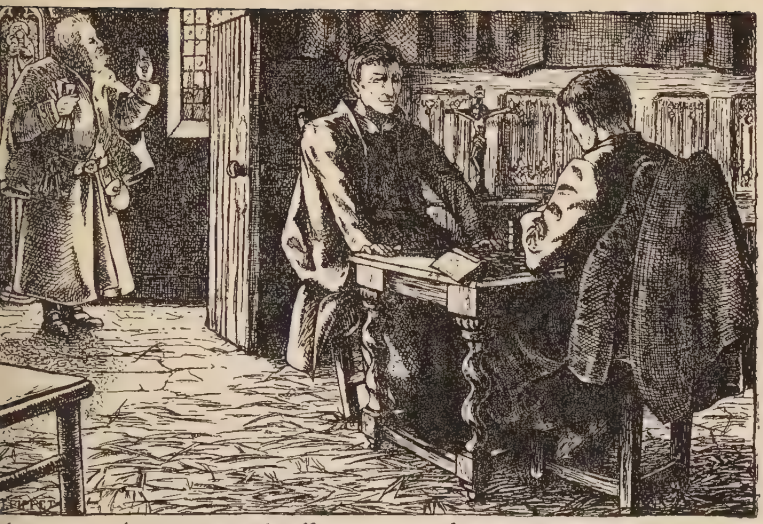
COLLEGE
OAKLAND

ACT I

Before the curtain rises, there is sung :—

Sing we the men who, once of old,
When England's glory and her name
Went down in blood and utter shame,
Rose for her, quick and bold.
Strong sons of strongest sires
Kindled again her flame,
And sent again to heaven her altar fires.
Ah! not on reeling deck or field of fame,
With maddening music and a leader's cry,
With hot blood beating and a world's applause
Was this their glorious conflict; theirs to live and die
In lonely constancy;
To meet a world's reviling; theirs to be
Fruit of the rack and chains and shameful gallows' tree
So lived in shame and strife
And passed to Life.

Curtain rises.



Hanse.... You must risk all if you would win a crown.

ACT I

TIME—*August 2nd*, 1580.

SCENE.—*The College at Rheims; the interior of a parlour near the Porter's Gate.* EVERARD HANSE *and* JOHN BALLARD, *discovered, with their books beside them, playing draughts. They play in silence for a moment or two.* EVERARD HANSE *looks about thirty years old; he moves and speaks impetuously.*

HANSE.

There is a crown for me! [*He leans back contentedly.*

BALLARD.

And for me.

HANSE (*after moving*).

No; you are too soon; and too little bold. You must risk all if you would win a crown.

[*As they continue playing, absorbed, steps are heard in cloister.*

PORTER (*entering; with papers in his hand, and turning*).

Come in, gentlemen, come in. God bless me! Whatever can we do with them all? (*He comes forward to* HANSE, *who, with* BALLARD, *has stood up.*) I beg pardon, sir; here are the new gentlemen arrived from England. I can bestow them nowhere but here for the present.

[HANSE *nods and makes a little gesture. He looks curiously at the arrivals.*

BALLARD (*aside to* HANSE).

Who are they? I had not heard of these.

[HANSE, *as they enter, shakes his head and stands forward.*

Enter SAMUEL CONYERS, WILLIAM RICHMOND, EDMUND CATHERACKE, GERARD CLIBBORNE, GEORGE GRIMSTON, VINCENT WARNER, JOHN GOUGHE, JOHN PIBUSH, JOHN BOST; *all are in travelling dress, and carry bags in their hands.*

CONYERS (*smiling*).

You must forgive us, gentlemen.

PORTER (*going out*).

Set your bags down, gentlemen; I will tell Mr. President you are come. [*Exit.*

HANSE (*smiling and bowing*).

I am Everard Hanse, sir, at your service. You are just from England?

[*The new arrivals look about them and talk together.*

CONYERS.

All of us, sir; my name is Samuel Conyers, and this is Mr. Richmond.

[*All put down their bags; and meanwhile* HANSE *shakes hands with them. When he comes to* JOHN BOST, BOST *announces his name, and together these two stand at the front with* PIBUSH, *who also gives his name. The rest arrange themselves in groups, talking to* BALLARD.

HANSE.

I have heard your name, Mr. Bost. Are you not from Oxford?

BOST.

I am, sir. (*He has a deep, pleasant voice; is stately and at his ease.*) I was a Fellow of Queen's College till lately.

HANSE.

And I from Cambridge; though I was no Fellow. And you, Mr. Pibush?

PIBUSH (*smiling*).

No, sir; I was baptized in the Faith as a child. I am from Thirsk.

HANSE (*bows to him*).

You have had a great grace, sir. And yet I have had one as great, for I was a minister till lately, till God had mercy on me.

BOST.

I remember, now, hearing your name, Mr. Hanse. You were reconciled by your own brother, were you not?

HANSE.

Yes, by my younger brother William, when I was at the point of death. We had many a controversy in old days. . . . And you have had a prosperous journey, gentlemen?

BOST.

We have prospered that we have arrived here safe and sound. And we had a fair wind to cross by.

HANSE.

You had no trouble at the port?

BOST.

No, sir; the Queen was very kind to us: she let us depart from her in peace.

HANSE.

You are luckier than some. The Queen's Majesty is most solicitous, they say, for all who come and go.

BOST.

She even holds some of them in chains, so much she fears that they will leave her.

HANSE.

Well, sir, and the rest of your journey was as prosperous?

BOST.

We had no trouble at any point. Mr. Pibush here fears that the crown will be withheld from him after all!

[*Smiling.*

HANSE (*to* PIBUSH).

You need not fear, sir. There is time enough for us all. (*To* BOST:) And what other news do you bring from England?

Enter PORTER, *followed by a servant, both carrying refreshments and glasses.*

PORTER.

Fall on, gentlemen. Mr. President will see you immediately.

[*They set down the food, bottles, and glasses on the table where the draught-board is placed, and exeunt, leaving door always open. All the others, except* BOST, HANSE, *and* PIBUSH, *crowd round the table.* BALLARD *pours wine into the glasses; and they pledge one another.* HANSE *draws up three chairs; and the three seat themselves* (L.), *front.*

HANSE.

And what news from England, Mr. Bost? Have you any new martyrdoms to tell us of? We are all agog for such things here, as you may think. Our community mass every day is for the country's conversion.

BOST.

Matters seem quiet, sir. There has no man suffered for Religion for a long time past.

HANSE.

Not since Sherwood? He was the last that we heard of.

BOST.

Not since Sherwood, and that was two years ago, sir—a long time in these days!

HANSE.

He was from Douay. Douay has not given birth to one martyr since she came to Rheims.

Enter PORTER.

PORTER.

Mr. Catheracke, Mr. Clibborne. Mr. President will see you, gentlemen.

[*Exeunt* CATHERACKE *and* CLIBBORNE *with* PORTER.

HANSE.

It is for their identity. There is need for caution in these days. Rheims is full of informers, it is said.

PIBUSH.

You had the Jesuits here, had you not, lately, Mr. Hanse?

HANSE.

Father Persons and Father Campion were here in June, with little brother Emerson. They are a gallant company, sir. I hear they are doing great things in England.

BOST.

They prosper beyond all belief. Father Campion is like a fire wherever he goes. Did you speak with them here?

HANSE.

Alas! I came four days too late; they were gone before I came. But I heard they had trouble when they landed in England. And have you seen them, Mr. Bost?

BOST.

No, sir; unless I set eyes on them without knowing it. And that may well be; for, like the Spirit of God Himself, Who guides them, no man can tell where they come nor whither they go. It is said that the Queen's Majesty is in a sad taking about them, and that the hunt is always at their heels. Father Campion preaches every day, I hear; and all run to hear him.

HANSE.

But Father Campion has been at Oxford, it is said?

BOST.

And that is true enough. He came there from London: but I did not hear of it, till he was gone again. I would I had! Ewbank told me of it.

Enter PORTER. *He calls out the names of* Mr. GRIMSTON, Mr. WARNER, Mr. GOUGHE. *Exeunt the three with* PORTER.

COLLEGE OAKLAND

HANSE.

I beg pardon, sir?

BOST.

My friend Henry Ewbank told me of it. He is one of those who are all mad for the Protestant religion; and cried out upon them as spies and traitors: and would give all he had to catch them, he said. We named him the Knave of Clubs at Oxford.

HANSE.

And who is this Knave of Clubs?

[*He rises; fetches two glasses of wine, and bread; presents them to* BOST *and* PIBUSH.

BOST.

Henry was my room-mate at Oxford. He is to be made a minister immediately.

HANSE.

You must take care of him, Mr. Bost, when you go to England.

BOST (*smiling*).

Oh! I have no fear of Henry. He is my very good friend. He would not injure me.

HANSE.

Did you know Mr. Matthews at Oxford?

BOST.

Yes, very well. Who did not! He was of Christchurch. They say he will be a great man some day, if he is not that already.

PIBUSH.

He is a minister, too?

BOST.

Yes, he is a minister; and very active against us, I hear. It is the ministers who are hottest against us everywhere; and I do not wonder at it. Their sheep are leaving them every day.

HANSE.

But the shepherds get the wool off them first, it seems.

BOST.

Why, yes; first and last. They are always a-shearing. But they are welcome to the wool, if we have their hearts. I hear that some of the gentlemen can scarcely live, so heavy are the fines they pay for their religion. But let us hear something of Rheims, Mr. Hanse.

HANSE (*smiling*).

Rheims, or rather Douay, is doing very well, in exile. There are better than a hundred students in the house.

PIBUSH.

What! All to be priests?

HANSE.

Yes, all to be priests. You will see them presently at Vespers.

BOST.

The College has not suffered then by the removal?

HANSE.

Why, no, not at all, rather the contrary. We are as active as ever we were.

BOST.

And the new version of the Scriptures?

HANSE.

That is near its ending. We are doing very well at all points. The English Universities are giving us new scholars continually; and God is giving us saints.

PIBUSH.

And the classes we shall attend?

HANSE.

That is a matter for Mr. President, Mr. Pibush. The younger students have the Classics and Philosophy and Hebrew; but the elder pass straight to Theology. You will know all that to-morrow, I have no doubt, and learn our customs.

BOST.

Are they so many then?

HANSE.

Why, no. But there are half-a-dozen, I daresay, peculiar to us. There is Our Lady's Litany on Saturdays, and the two rosaries for our Benefactors. But you will have your three playdays first to learn all these.

Enter PORTER. *He comes forward to front; as bell begins to ring,* BALLARD *springs up and runs out.*

PORTER.

The President begs that you will entertain these gentlemen, sir, till he can send for them.

HANSE.

Very well. [*Turns to* BOST.] Then there will be no Vespers for us to-night, Mr. Bost. The President, no doubt, wishes to finish with your names and histories at once.

PORTER (*at door*).

Mr. Conyers and Mr. Richmond.

[*Exeunt* CONYERS *and* RICHMOND *with* PORTER.

[*The room begins to darken.* HANSE *rises and fetches the table with the refreshments and the draught-board. He sets it down before the three; they sip wine from time to time, and crumble the bread.*

HANSE.

Take plenty, gentlemen. This is all the supper you will get, I fear, on Our Lady's eves in Rheims; and you have

come from a long journey. [*He fills* PIBUSH'S *glass.* BOST *motions bottle aside. He sets down bottle.*] See, I had just gained a crown when you came! [*Shows draught-board.*

BOST.

Indeed a very good omen!

[*He lifts his glass to him, smiling.*

HANSE (*also smiling*).

I did not think of that. But it is a very good omen. God fulfil it! You must learn our game of "Cat" here, Mr. Bost, if you are not too grave a gentleman.

PIBUSH.

I hear they play at racking in Rome. Is that true, do you think?

HANSE.

Why, yes, I should think so: like St. Laurence jesting upon his gridiron. These young men are full of their games, eh, Mr. Bost?

BOST (*smiling*).

It will be enough for an older man to jest upon it when it comes.

PIBUSH (*looking rather excitedly from one to the other*).

But—but God will surely give us grace to bear it, if it comes upon us!

HANSE.

We must pray that it be so, Mr. Pibush.

[*An organ is heard playing softly off.*

HANSE.

They will go by directly. You will be able to see them. Ah! they come!

[*They all rise and turn towards the door. The cloister outside is now illuminated; and after a moment or two the students go past, two and two, twenty divines, headed by thurifer and acolytes followed by four copemen and priest. They pass from right to left and disappear. The three in the room remain watching; then a door is heard to close. The three sit down again.* HANSE *rises, fetches a candle and lights it from a taper burning out of sight in the cloister, putting it upon the table.*

HANSE.

No, Mr. President was not with them. He will send for you presently.

[*He sits. Vespers begins; heard through closed door, and continues throughout the rest of scene.*

BOST.

You have a great company here. It warms my heart to see them.

HANSE (*softly*).

And that company is but the sowing-time. What then of the harvest? *Sanguis martyrum.* . . .

[PIBUSH *rises, rather uneasily; passes to back of stage, and begins to walk up and down slowly with his hands folded behind his back: he stops now and then, listening to music; then resumes walk.*

BOST (*with a little gesture*).

Do not observe him, sir; he is a young man; but will be gallant in danger, I think. He bore himself very well at the ports.

HANSE (*smiling*).

Why, I thought nothing else of him, sir. He is gallant to have kept the faith, when you and I lost it!

BOST (*playing with his glass*).

My mother has always been faithful. It was her prayers, I think, that brought me to a better mind.

HANSE.

And me my brother reconciled. It is not with us, as with some, that a man's foes are those of his household. They have been to us the best friends that ever we had.

BOST (*abruptly*).

Mr. Hanse, do you fear death?

HANSE.

Why, we all fear it, I suppose. But I hope to meet it well, by God's grace.

BOST.

They say it is easier when we grow old. But I do not find it so. . . . I know very well that I carry my life in my hand now . . . (*breaks off*). When do you go to England, sir?

HANSE.

Why, I am not yet a sub-deacon; but I hope to have all done by next year.

BOST.

And I too, perhaps. Dr. Allen sent me news that I should not have to wait long.

HANSE.

It may be we shall go together.

BOST (*looking at him*).

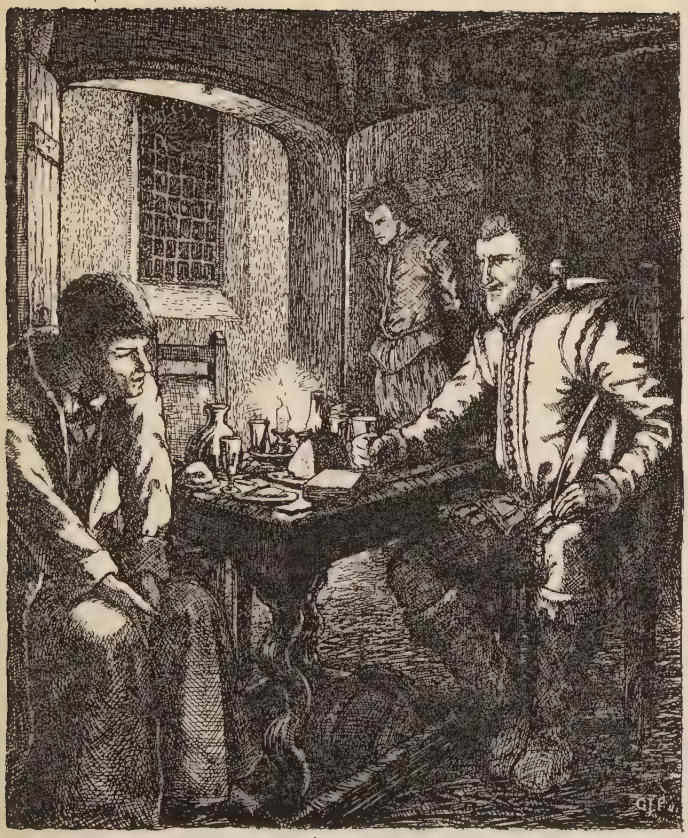
I wonder how far we shall go together. . . . Where will you go in England?

HANSE (*shaking his head and smiling*).

Who can tell that?

BOST.

I am for Yorkshire first, I hear. And my Lord Montague will shelter me, if I need it. There be many priests in livery!



Bost...."You shall be hated of all men,"...

HANSE.

And they call us skulkers for it! Do they think we shall come in our habits?

BOST (*dropping his hand heavily on the table*).

Mr. Hanse, it was that among other things that turned my mind to the Catholic Church. There is neither justice nor rights for Catholics in England. "You shall be hated of all men," said our Saviour. There is not one who has a good word for us; and it is we who built their colleges for them, and their churches; and they take all, and call us traitors for not being as they are. If we come openly as priests, then we are fools; and if privately, as servants or grooms, then are we knaves! And whichever way we come, or if we come not at all, then are we no true Englishmen! I tell you, sir, I have seen an old monk, out of his wits from privations, begging bread at doors which were once his own. There is Durham—I was born near Appleby, in Westmoreland—there is Durham, once a great house of religious. Now it hath a Dean and a few prebendaries, who reap what the monks sowed, and abuse them for sowing it! Why, sir, I am hot when I think on it! And yet I too once used the money of those men and forsook their religion.

HANSE.

But you have made amends, Mr. Bost. For what can a man give more than his life? And you are ready to do that, by God's grace!

BOST.

I would give a hundred, if I had them—by God's grace.

HANSE.

And I too had my living! Dear God! how it burns me to think of it! And I preached the new religion too, as solemn as an owl!

Enter PORTER.

PORTER.

Mr. Pibush. The President will see you, sir.

[*Exeunt* PORTER *and* PIBUSH.

HANSE.

He is keeping you to the last, Mr. Bost.

BOST (*sitting with his head on his hand heavily*).

Yet my life is God's in any event; and half of it I have squandered on myself.

HANSE.

Our Saviour drank even vinegar upon the Cross.

BOST.

Vinegar? What do you mean by that?

HANSE.

Why, the dregs of the wine; and He thanked those who gave even that, no doubt.

[BOST *looks at him a moment; then he puts out his hand, and* HANSE *takes it. They hold hands a moment in silence.*

BOST.

Then I give Him that with all my heart, Mr. Hanse. It is all that I can do. [*Silence a moment.*

HANSE.

Have you ever seen Dr. Allen?

BOST.

No, but I have had a letter or two from him.

HANSE.

It is he, as you know, who, under God, is doing the most for England—he at least and St. Ignatius. Mr. Bost, you will be astonished at the zeal of the young men here. Dr. Allen says he is like a huntsman with hounds in leash pulling him off his legs, so eager are they to be at Satan his throat.

BOST.

And what when they are torn by Satan?

HANSE.

Blood seems to madden them the more. When Sherwood suffered, there was near a rebellion here, so eager were they all to take his place. The President told them to have patience, and that their time would come, but even so he could hardly restrain them. Mr. Bost, it is wonderful to see how these young men seem to desire perils and death as others desire offices and honours.

BOST.

I had heard so in England. Men say there that never was there such madness since the days of the Apostles.

HANSE.

Yes, sir. These men too are full of new wine.

BOST.

God give me a long draught of it!

HANSE.

You need not fear for that.

BOST (*after a pause, in which the last psalm of the first Vespers of Our Lady is heard in process of being sung*).

It is we older men who need that wine of fervour more than the young, who have never ceased to drink it.

HANSE.

Yes, sir, and we need it for other reasons, too.

BOST.

What do you mean by that?

HANSE.

Why, it is we who are the marked men in England. They know us; but these young sparks, as they think them, have more chance to go scathless.

BOST.

That is true enough. . . . What Vespers are they singing?

HANSE.

They are the first Vespers of Our Lady's feast. It is *Sancta Maria ad nives* to-morrow.

BOST.

And that, too, is a good omen for me; for she caused her white grace to fall even in my own barren heart.

"Ave Maris Stella" begins to be sung, and the two listen in silence.

BOST (*as the third verse begins*).

Solve vincla reis; Profer lumen caecis. That is what we need in England, Mr. Hanse. . . . *Mala nostra pelle!* May she do so for us all!

Enter PORTER.

PORTER.

Mr. Bost, Mr. President will see you.

[*He gathers up the luggage from the floor.* HANSE *and* BOST *rise, and go towards the door. Exit* PORTER, *who stands waiting outside.*

BOST.

I shall see you again?

HANSE.

I will come to you presently, Mr. Bost.

[*Exit* BOST. HANSE *bows to him, and stands listening to the close of the hymn.*

CURTAIN

TABLEAU

(SIX MONTHS LATER, MARCH 4TH, 1581)

Ordination of JOHN BOST *as Priest at Châlons-sur-Marne.* JOHN BOST *is receiving the instruments from Bishop;* EVERARD HANSE, *just ordained Deacon.* Dr. ALLEN, *as Assistant Priest, presenting the ordinands. Deacons, sub-deacons, acolytes, &c.* BALLARD *and* RICHMOND *are among the newly ordained Priests;* CONYERS, CATHERACKE, CLIBBORNE, GRIMSTON, WARNER, *and* GOUGHE *are visible. Choir during Tableau sing the following:—*

I

O priest of God! lift up thy head
To take the hands that offer thee
The crown of priesthood that shall be
In very truth, as saints have said,
A thorny crown of Calvary.

II

O priest of God! gird on to thee
The garb of Jesu's Passion-dress,
And let thy very robes confess
The glories of His Purity,
His Strength, His Love, His Righteousness.

III

O priest of God! thine hand stretch up,
And take the mystic bread and wine,
The Paten and the Host Divine,
The chalice that shall be a Cup
To hold thy Saviour's Blood—and thine.

IV

O priest of God! make haste and go!
Pilate and Judas wait for thee,
The garden of Gethsemane;
And Jesus, in His Church below,
Makes haste Himself to Calvary.

ACT II

Before the curtain rises, there is sung:—

I

My father! all is here, the altar set,
The fire, the wood, the knife of Abraham!
Yet where the sacrifice? Doth God forget?
"My Son, God gives the Lamb."

II

My father! all is ready; Judas waits;
The purse is passed; the sop! and all in place!
The night is come! the men are at the gates!
"My Son, he comes apace."

III

My father! see arrayed the host of heaven!
All saints and martyrs that this earth have trod!
Yet still one palm unclaimed—one crown ungiven!
"My Son, leave all to God."

Curtain rises.

More than the smoke can escape through that chimney, sir.

ACT II

SCENE I

TIME—*Evening of September 9th, 1593 (twelve years later).*

SCENE.—*The Waterhouse near Durham. The Hall. Discovered* THOMAS ROBINSON, *standing at parlour door, listening to one inside. Long pauses between sentences.*

THOMAS.

Yes, mistress. . . . Yes, mistress, it is all ready. . . . Yes, mistress. . . . No, madam, his reverence must leave early in the morning. . . . Yes, mistress; I will explain

all, and send his reverence to see you as soon as he has supped. . . . Yes, mistress; I will tell him; the altar linen in the cupboard with the rest of the furniture. . . . Yes, mistress.

[*He comes to front and begins to arrange table with supper. He puts another log on the fire. Then he pauses and listens. Then he goes across quickly to door* (L.). *As he comes to it, there is knocking.*

THOMAS.

Who is there?

[*Pauses for answer, then unbolts door eagerly.*

Enter JOHN BOST *and* FRANCIS EGLESFIELD, *both booted and cloaked;* EGLESFIELD *carrying a bag.* THOMAS *drops on one knee to receive blessing, then bolts door and follows other two towards fire.* JOHN BOST *is in white jerkin and blue lace, rat-coloured cloak, buff leather hose.*

THOMAS.

Good day, sir. Thank God you are come safe again.

BOST.

Why, yes, Thomas; all was quiet enough. Mr. Eglesfield met me as was arranged, and carried me here. And your mistress?

THOMAS.

Mrs. Claxton is with my lady. My lady is not well to-night.

BOST.

Not well? She was well enough last month when I was here. [*He undoes his cloak.*

THOMAS.

My lady has had no news from my Lord of Westmoreland. She is very heavy, sir, and she has taken a little chill. It is nothing grave, but she keeps her room. She begs your reverence will speak with her after supper. She lies in the parlour.

BOST.

And Mrs. Claxton?

THOMAS.

Mrs. Claxton and Mrs. Adylyn are both with my lady. Will Mr. Eglesfield sup with your reverence?

EGLESFIELD.

No, no, Thomas; I must be away again. I came but to bring Mr. Bost——

BOST.

Mr. Hartley, sir, if you please. [*Smiling.*

EGLESFIELD.

Why, yes; confound it—Mr. Hartley, I meant; and my lad is without with the horses. I must begone again.

BOST.

I will speak with my lady at once, if she will see me. Will you enquire for me?

[*He throws off his cloak and arranges his dress.* THOMAS *goes to door* (L.), *and raps on it. After a pause he speaks.*

THOMAS.

His reverence is come, madam. . . . He will speak with my lady now, if she will see him. . . . Mr. Eglesfield is here. . . . No, madam; he says he must go again. . . . (*To* BOST:) Mr. Hartley, will you come in, my lady says.

[*He opens door.* BOST *exit.*

EGLESFIELD.

What time will his reverence say Mass to-morrow?

[THOMAS *comes back; continues arranging supper, &c.*

THOMAS.

Why, sir, I should think at six o'clock. He said he must be away again at seven.

EGLESFIELD.

That is very well. I will be here then at that time. I am for confession and communion to-morrow. Will my lady be there?

THOMAS.

I think not, sir. My lady has not left her room for two days.

[EGLESFIELD *stands eyeing the house, warming himself. Presently he turns and strikes the chimney breast.*

EGLESFIELD.

You have a fine solid house here, Thomas.

THOMAS.

Yes, sir; and that chimney——

EGLESFIELD.

Yes?

THOMAS.

More than the smoke can escape through that chimney, sir.

EGLESFIELD.

More than the smoke! Why, what do you mean by that?

[THOMAS *during this last sentence has gone out, front entrance* (L.), *to fetch food, and does not hear.* EGLESFIELD *continues eyeing the chimney, puts his head up. Re-enter* THOMAS.

EGLESFIELD.

What priests have you had here lately, Thomas?

THOMAS (*stopping to reckon*).

Well, Mr. Bost—— Hartley hath been here two or three times; Mr. Vernon, chaplain to Mr. Joseph Constable; Mr. Medcalf was here in July——Ah, yes; you were here at that time, Mr. Eglesfield.

EGLESFIELD.

I was.

THOMAS.

Then my Lady Gray came here in August with two priests and I with them. You were here then again, were you not, sir?

EGLESFIELD.

Yes, I was here then too.

THOMAS.

Then Mr. Dudley has been once or twice, and Mr. Lee and Mr. Medcalf again. We have been very well served with priests, sir, as well as any place in the north, I should think. The house stands very lonely, you see, sir.

EGLESFIELD.

Mr. Hartley came here once for safety, did he not?

THOMAS.

Yes, sir; with Mr. Dudley. Mr. John Carr, of Newcastle, smuggled them away.

EGLESFIELD.

Eh! Who is that?

THOMAS.

Mr. John Carr, sir. A very fervent Catholic. He is postmaster at Newcastle.

EGLESFIELD.

Carr—John Carr. I will remember that name. . . . And where is Mr. Claxton? Do you know that?

THOMAS.

I think he is travelling in the north, sir. He often speaks of you.

EGLESFIELD.

Why, what has he to say of me?

THOMAS.

He speaks of your goodness to him, sir.

EGLESFIELD.

Oh, yes—that. . . . And you do not know where he is?

THOMAS.

No, sir.

Enter BOST. *He pauses at the door.*

BOST (*speaking off*).

Fear nothing, madam. All is safe here. . . . I have Thomas here. . . . Yes, yes; I can manage very well for myself. . . . Good-night, madam. God keep you.

[*He shuts door.*

EGLESFIELD.

How is my lady?

BOST.

She is just a little overwrought and anxious. She will be well enough to-morrow, but I have bidden her to keep her bed in the morning.

[*He comes round to the fire.* THOMAS *undoes bag and draws out a long dark gown and shoes.* BOST *sits down and draws off his boots, putting on shoes and gown and black cap while conversation proceeds.*

EGLESFIELD.

Well, Mr. Hartley, I must be riding. My lad and the horses will be cold. And you say Mass at six o'clock?

BOST.

At six.

EGLESFIELD.

I will be here a little before that time then. I will come to confession, sir, if you please, and to communion.

BOST.

Very well, Mr. Eglesfield.

EGLESFIELD.

And you ride at seven?

BOST.

If God will. Why do you ask? Will you ride with me a little way?

EGLESFIELD (*confused*).

Why, no, sir, I did not think of that. . . . [*Hastily*] Your blessing, sir. [*He kneels.*

BOST (*standing*).

Benedictio Dei omnipotentis, Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti, descendat super te et maneat semper. Good-night, sir. (*He comes with him across to door* (L.); *unbolts it. To* THOMAS) Strong bolts, Thomas.

THOMAS.

Why, yes, sir. There is good reason for them.

BOST (*as* EGLESFIELD *exit*).

Good-night, sir; good-night.

[*He stands looking out for a moment, holding the lantern he has taken off its peg. Then he replaces lantern, bolts door, and comes back slowly and thoughtfully. He sits down in silence.* THOMAS *begins to serve him, and continues during conversation, which is slow and broken.*

THOMAS (*after a pause*).

That is a good man, sir. . . .

BOST.

Eh? A good man, you say?

THOMAS.

A very good man, sir, is Mr. Eglesfield. He has done Mr. Claxton many a good service. . . .

BOST.

Indeed?

THOMAS.

Yes, sir; he lent him money when he was in great straits once on a time. And he is a devout man, sir, too; he has been here to Mass many a time. He seems to fear nothing. . . .

BOST.

Did he ask any questions when I was with my lady?

THOMAS.

Why, yes, sir; he seemed very curious about what priests had been here.

BOST.

He did? And did you tell him?

THOMAS.

Yes, sir; I told him——

BOST.

He asked me many questions, too. . . . Has he always been a Catholic?

THOMAS.

I think so, sir. . . . [*Long pause.*

BOST.

And a devout man, you say?

THOMAS.

Very devout, sir.

BOST.

Then that is very good. [*He eats in silence. Then suddenly*] And he asked you about this house?

THOMAS.

He said it was a fine solid house, sir.

BOST.

And you said . . . ?

THOMAS.

I said he was right, sir; and that more could escape through the chimney than the smoke.

BOST (*starts*).

You said that, Thomas? Did he understand you?

THOMAS (*unconscious*).

Why, no, sir. I think he did not. I was out of the room after saying that. . . .

BOST.

And he said no more?

THOMAS.

I think not, sir.

BOST (*after a pause; meditatively*).

And he is a devout man . . . and he comes to Mass . . . and he hath lent Mr. Claxton a sum of money . . . and he seems to fear nothing.

THOMAS.

Yes, sir.

[*A long silence.* BOST *finishes supper, says grace, and comes to the fire and sits.* THOMAS *begins to clear away food.*

BOST.

Thomas!

THOMAS (*pauses with dishes*).

Yes, sir.

BOST.

Who will be at Mass to-morrow?

THOMAS.

There will be Mrs. Claxton, Mrs. Adylyn, Mr. Eglesfield, and myself, sir.

BOST.

No one else?

THOMAS.

No, sir; unless a stranger or two come in.

[*Silence again.* BOST *stares at the fire. When* THOMAS *has moved a few things, he comes back.*

THOMAS.

You are to lie in the priest's room, Mr. Hartley. The altar furniture and the linen are in the press. . . . Is there anything I can do for you, sir?

BOST (*abruptly*).

Yes; sit down and talk to me, Thomas.

THOMAS.

Thank you, sir. Mrs. Claxton bade me make all safe for the night. May I do that and return, sir?

[BOST *nods.* *Exit* THOMAS. *Sounds of bolting heard. He comes downstairs again, puts up chain at door* (L.). *Lifts down the lantern; blows it out; returns. While he is gone,* BOST *leans forward, elbows on knees, staring at fire.* THOMAS *stands.* BOST *motions him to a seat.*

THOMAS.

All is safe, sir.

BOST (*starting from muse*).

Eh?

THOMAS.

All is safe, sir.

BOST.

Why, yes, in Jesu's keeping. *At nisi Dominus.* . . . Unless the Lord keep the house, he watcheth in vain that keepeth it. . . . Eh, Thomas?

THOMAS (*softly*).

Yes, sir.

COLLEGE OAKLAND

BOST.

Vigilate et orate itaque. . . . Watch ye and pray therefore, lest coming suddenly, He find you sleeping.

THOMAS.

Yes, sir.

BOST.

Oh, Thomas, I am getting an old man. I am nearly fifty years old. Would you think that?

THOMAS.

Why, Mr. Hartley——

BOST.

And near thirteen years a priest in England. And they have never yet laid me by the heels.

THOMAS.

God grant they never do that, sir. You will die in your bed.

BOST (*smiling*).

You would rob me of my crown? Well, it may be so. *Domine, non sum dignus.* . . . I know that. But I had thought otherwise. He hath done so much for me that I had hoped even that. He took me and left others. There is poor Henry Ewbank—the Knave of Clubs he was named

at Oxford. You know where Oxford is, Thomas? It is where the young men who should be priests learn to be ministers.

THOMAS.

Yes, sir.

BOST.

Well, there is poor Henry Ewbank. He is a minister, Thomas, with a fat living, and very hot against us Papists. Ah, poor Henry, I wonder when I shall set eyes on him again! He was my chamber-mate. . . . (*Muses.*) And then of those He chose like me! See what great things He hath done for them—*quam mirabilia fecit!* There was Everard Hanse, Thomas. He met me at my first coming to Rheims. I dearly loved that man! He had been a minister, too, like myself. He was made priest three weeks after me and a martyr six months later. There was John Pibush, who came with me to Rheims. Well, he is at large yet; but I am sure he will not be so long. He is bold and indiscreet, as he always was. There is Samuel Conyers. He has been taken, why, six years ago, and sent into banishment. There is Antony Mayor. He was taken and put to the question. Well, the less said of him the better. God help him! Then there was Mr. Davies, the schoolmaster, who won his crown two months ago.—And many a one more! And I am here still. The Lord hath no need of me, it seems, though I am but an ass.

THOMAS.

Sir, He needs you here, maybe.

BOST.

It may be so, Thomas. I pray it be so.

THOMAS.

Why, sir, you do so much for us.

BOST (*suddenly; half seriously*).

Retro Sathanas! Do you think the devil has not told me that an hundred times, and all to rob me of my crown? And you would help him!

THOMAS.

I ask your pardon, sir——

BOST.

And when I think what our Lord has done for me! Did you know I was a minister, Thomas—a persecuting Saul, with a fat living from my college and the good will of all men? And He has been gracious enough to take me from that and to bring me to a better mind. Is that not enough? And He will give me heaven, too, if His justice will let Him!

THOMAS (*uneasily*).

Yes, sir.

BOST (*emphatically*).

I tell you, Thomas, that to be a priest is joy enough for any man. But to be a priest in England at this time—why, it near breaks my heart for joy!

THOMAS.

Yes, sir.

BOST.

We should be merry, then. Our Lord would have us merry. I have been telling my lady so. Why, see how Father Campion went to heaven! He was merry to the end. Then there was Henry Oldfield. He was with me at Rheims, and was made priest with me; and Nicholas Wheeler—all merry and courageous.

THOMAS.

Yes, sir.

BOST.

Then do you be merry, too, whatever befalls. . . . Hark! [*Wind moans and dies.*

THOMAS.

It is but the wind, sir.

BOST.

It is but the wind—one of God's ministers like all the rest. Did you think it sounded sorrowful?

THOMAS.

Why, yes, sir.

BOST.

I tell you it is not sorrowful; it is rejoicing, as should all God's ministers. I tell you it seemed to me to be a voice of all the sons of God shouting for joy.

THOMAS.

Why should they shout for joy, sir?

BOST.

Why, since God is in travail again with His new creation, bringing order from chaos and life from death. Is not that enough to shout for? And so in darkness He builds again His fallen towers in England! (*A silence follows. The wind rises again and sinks.* BOST *shifts his position.*) You will be merry, then?

THOMAS.

I will try to be merry, sir.

BOST.

Then that is very well. . . .

[*Wind rises again; and in the wind, voices singing, very faint and indistinct, with closed lips, the air of "Deus Tuorum."*

BOST.

There, Thomas, did you hear that?

THOMAS.

I hear but the wind, sir.

BOST (*sitting up with parted lips*).

There, Thomas! (*Air grows clearer.*) Why, listen, man! (*Wind sinks to silence.*) Only the wind then?

THOMAS.

Only the wind, sir.

BOST.

Then that is very well. [*A silence follows.*

THOMAS.

Will you not go to bed, sir?

BOST.

I must pray before I sleep, Thomas. I have yet Compline to say, *Qui habitat*—"He that dwelleth in the aid of the Most High," and the rest. But do you go to bed. All is safe, you say?

THOMAS.

The house is barred. [*He rises.*

BOST.

A very good answer. You have learned one lesson, then?

THOMAS.

Yes, sir.

BOST.

Good-night, then, my son.

THOMAS.

Good-night, sir. [*He kneels*, BOST *rises.*

Deus, tuorum militum Sors, et corona, præmium. Laudes canentes Martyris Absolve nexu criminis.

BOST.

Benedicat te, &c. [*He sits.*

[THOMAS *goes up staircase; he pauses on platform to listen to wind, which rises once more with the voices: then he turns and stares at* BOST, *who is motionless.*

THOMAS.

Good-night, sir. [*Pauses; then exit.*

[BOST *makes no answer: he listens; then suddenly he rises, throws himself on his knees, and stretches out his arms. Voices rise clearer.*

CURTAIN.

SCENE II

SCENE *as before. Before scene opens, bell rings once. Long silence. Daylight increases slowly through the scene.*

Enter hurriedly through staircase door FRANCIS EGLESFIELD. *He comes down steps, fastening his cloak, pauses at foot and listens: goes to front door, opens it, makes a sign. Then he suddenly turns, half closing door, as enters* THOMAS.

THOMAS.

Sir, Mr. Eglesfield, will you take some food before you ride?

EGLESFIELD (*confused*).

I—I was but speaking to my lad.

THOMAS (*coming downstairs*).

You are in a mighty hurry, sir. Mrs. Claxton bade me ask you to breakfast with the priest.

EGLESFIELD.

Why, I fear I have not time for that.

THOMAS.

Sir, he will be down presently, he has begun his thanksgiving.

EGLESFIELD (*hesitating*).

Well, well, I will but speak to my lad, and be back.

[*Exit door* (L.).

[THOMAS *looks after him doubtfully. Then he appears to hear a sound, and goes quickly to the door* (R.).

THOMAS.

Yes, my lady. . . . Yes, my lady, the Mass is over. That was Mr. Eglesfield who went out. . . . Yes, my lady, he said he would be back. . . . No, my lady, Mrs. Claxton and Mrs. Adylyn are still upstairs. . . . Yes, my lady, they will bestow the altar furniture—they told me so. Yes, my lady, the breakfast is ready. Yes, my lady, I will speak to the groom. (*He comes across to door* (L.), *opens it, stands.*) Why! where is Mr. Eglesfield running so fast? Ah! he goes to see if all be clear, no doubt. (*Calls.*) John, John, get the priest's horse ready presently, he will ride at seven o'clock. (*He shuts the door, and comes across to door* (R.). It is done, my lady, John has set about the saddling. . . . Yes, my lady, I will fetch the dishes in immediately. . . . No, my lady, the priest is not down yet; he is at his thanksgiving. . . . Yes, my lady, Mr. Eglesfield was at confession and communion. I will tell Mrs. Claxton,

my lady, as soon as she comes. (*He listens a moment, nodding in assent.*) Yes, my lady.

[*Exit, upstairs and through door. The stage is empty; then the door* (L.) *is pushed open.* EGLESFIELD *appears, looks round, and listens; exit again. Re-enter* THOMAS, *carrying dishes; he sets them down; exit again; returns with cloak, hat, and boots; he sets them by the hearth. Enter* BOST.

BOST.

Why, where is Mr. Eglesfield?

[*He comes down steps in riding-dress.*

THOMAS.

He is gone out, sir; he will be back immediately, he told me.

BOST (*sharply*).

Where is he gone?

THOMAS.

I saw him running just now. He said he would speak to his lad and come back.

BOST (*with studied ease*).

Thomas, my son, look out for me, and see if he is coming.

THOMAS.

Yes, sir. (*He goes to door, opens and looks;* BOST, *drawing on his boots, eyes him.*) No, sir, there is no one in sight.

BOST.

Ah! very well. Is the horse ready?

[*He finishes boots and puts on cloak.*

THOMAS (*coming back*).

Yes, sir, immediately; John is saddling him.

BOST.

Fetch my bag down, Thomas, and see if all be put away safe. (*Exit* THOMAS *upstairs.* BOST *goes quickly across to door, opens it, looks out, comes back.*) No, there is no one. (*He sits down and begins to eat.*)

[*Enter* THOMAS *with bag.*

THOMAS.

All is bestowed safely. Mrs. Claxton bade me tell you she would be down immediately, sir.

BOST (*nodding*).

Yes, yes. So Mr. Eglesfield is coming back?

THOMAS.

Yes, sir. When shall you come again, sir?

BOST (*steadily*).

That is in God's hands. How is my lady this morning?

THOMAS.

She spoke to me just now. She asked whether you were down yet.

BOST.

I will speak to her before I go. She is in bed?

THOMAS.

Yes, sir.

BOST.

I think she will rise presently.

THOMAS.

Is she better, then, sir?

BOST (*steadily*).

She will rise presently, I think—lest when He come suddenly—

THOMAS.

Your pardon, sir?

BOST.

It was nothing, Thomas. (*He stands, says grace, takes up his hat. He stands facing audience; he has strange*

expression.) (*Softly*) Rise, let us go; behold, he is at hand——

[*A knocking at the door.* BOST *does not turn; he smiles.* THOMAS *goes across floor;* BOST *turns and goes after him. As door opens, enter* EGLESFIELD *on to threshold. He is agitated and breathless.*

EGLESFIELD.

Mr. Hartley, sir, you are going?

BOST.

Immediately, Mr. Eglesfield. You come with me?

EGLESFIELD.

No, sir; no, sir. I must ride. Your blessing, sir.

[*He kneels.*

BOST (*very slowly*).

Benedictio Dei, &c.

[*He looks hard at* EGLESFIELD. EGLESFIELD *stands, bows, and exit. Door is left partly open.* BOST *turns.*

BOST.

Thomas, bid Mrs. Claxton make haste. I must ride.

COLLEGE OAKLAND

THOMAS.

Yes, sir.

[*Exit* THOMAS. BOST *takes a step or two forward, stands waiting and listening: his lips move. Then he goes to the door*

Judas.

again, and looks out. He starts a little, half turns, and again stands watching. Enter THOMAS.

THOMAS.

The mistress is coming immediately. Why, Mr. Hartley!—

[*He stops dead, staring out, half crouching.*

BOST.

Yes, my son. [*He faces him, smiling.*

THOMAS.

Look, sir, look ! [*He creeps a step nearer the door.*

BOST.

Yes, my son. Unless the Lord keep the house——

THOMAS.

Sir, sir ! For Jesu's sake ! (*He dashes past him, bangs the door, bolts it furiously—turns.*) Sir, upstairs ! upstairs ! There is not an instant. They are upon us.

BOST (*still smiling*).

Where is the use ?

THOMAS (*throwing himself on knees*).

Sir, I entreat you, for Jesu's sake. Upstairs with you and in.

BOST.

Stand up, Thomas. Let us be merry to the end. This is but play-acting.

THOMAS.

Sir, upstairs ! (*rises and begins to drag him*). For all our sakes—you would not bring ruin——

[*A loud banging at the door. A voice : "Open, open in the Queen's name."*

THOMAS.

Sir, for all our sakes—the ladies——

BOST.

You think there is hope? (*banging, voices*).

THOMAS.

Yes, yes. Come, sir, come!

BOST.

Well, then, let us play it to the end. We will crown all with a game of hide-and-seek. Let go, my son; I will go peaceably in Jesu's name.

[*Exit upstairs. A voice at door: "Open, open in the Queen's name." Banging.* THOMAS *stands irresolute. Then he dashes to door* (R.).

THOMAS.

Hush, my lady, hush! It is the pursuivants. Go back to bed, my lady! lie there—feign to be asleep!

VOICE.

Open, open.

[*Battering breaks out.* THOMAS *stands staring; then he seems to catch sight of some one at stairs-door. He waves furiously, running upstairs.*

THOMAS.

Back, mistress, back. I will open presently. Back! Do not show yourselves.

[*He closes door and comes downstairs; goes to* (L.) *door.*

VOICE.

Open, open in the Queen's name.

THOMAS.

Who is there?

VOICE.

In the Queen's name, I tell you.

THOMAS.

Nay; but how do I know you come in the Queen's name? [*His eyes roll round.*

VOICE.

Nay, then, if you will not——

[*A splintering crash.* THOMAS *stands back against wall, staring. The door is wrenched open, and there enter in confusion* OUTLAW, Mr. RALPH BOWES, Mr. EWBANK, *and four men.*

THOMAS.

By what warrant——

OUTLAW.

Bah! Warrant enough! Seize him, men. Search! (*Sees bag.*) Aha! his bag!

[*Places it aside. Two seize* THOMAS; *the three stagger to and fro. Then* THOMAS *is bound round arms and feet, thrust into chair. Meanwhile* BOWES *and* EWBANK *come forward to hearth.* OUTLAW, *during this, with other two, looks round walls, tapping here and there. At end he catches sight of staircase-door opening, and darts upstairs.*

OUTLAW.

Stand back, mistress! stand back! I tell you, stand back, or you will be in trouble. (*He shuts door and fastens it. Comes down.*) Search, men!

[*The two begin to skirt round walls, looking, tapping, lifting hangings.* OUTLAW *goes to door* (R.), *tries door, fastened, shakes it angrily.*

OUTLAW.

Who is there? . . . Why, it is a woman. Tell us, fellow, who is there?

THOMAS (*sullenly*).

It is my lady!

OUTLAW (*mocking him*).

My lady! my lady! is it? What "my lady," you fool?

THOMAS (*angrily*).

It is my Lady Margaret Neville.

OUTLAW.

Oho! Another of the Popish brood! [*Shouts through door.*] Make haste, my lady, if you be in bed. We shall be in presently. [*Turns away; ascends stairs.*

BOWES.

Where to, Outlaw?

OUTLAW.

To my ladies in here. I'll be bound the priest's behind their skirts.

EWBANK.

There is no window he can escape by?

OUTLAW.

No, sir, all the ways are guarded. (*Unlocks door.*) Stand back there. [*Exit, shutting door behind him.*

BOWES.

Down with the panels, men, lose no time!

OUTLAW (*looking through stairs door*).

Here, two of you!

[*He beckons; two leave walls, and go upstairs. Exeunt all three. A noise of trampling and banging heard overhead. On stage the two left begin to wrench off panels, tear down hangings.*

EWBANK (*to* THOMAS).

Now, my man, if you were loyal to her Grace you would tell us where the priest is. (THOMAS *is silent.*) You Popish traitor! See here! we will have the fellow, if we have to pull down the house for him.

THOMAS.

Are you a minister, sir?

EWBANK.

I am, blessed be God!

THOMAS.

Then God have mercy on your flock!

EWBANK.

You insolent knave! How dare you speak so to me?

THOMAS.

A minister! God should have mercy on Himself, if He should be driven to use such fellows as you!

[EWBANK *makes furious gesture.*

BOWES.

Let him alone, Mr. Ewbank.

THOMAS.

Ewbank! Ewbank! Then you are the man——

[*Stops, confounded.*

EWBANK.

Well, knave—I am the man—Eh! What do you mean?

[THOMAS *stares at him.*

BOWES.

Leave him alone, sir. You get nothing but foul words from a Papist.

[*Enter, laughing,* OUTLAW, *and one man carrying bundle of vestments and altar furniture.* OUTLAW *stops on threshold.*

OUTLAW.

Now then, mistress, it's no use crying out. We've got them, and we'll have the priest, too. (*To man within.*) Keep them quiet in there—we'll come back for them presently. (*Comes downstairs.*) See here! we have their

Popish trinkets. The wolf will not be far from the sheep's clothing.

BOWES.

Say rather the ass's skin.

OUTLAW.

Why, that would make him a lion, and he is no lion to skulk like this. [*Laughter.*

THOMAS.

Ah! you foul villains! God strike you!

[*He struggles in rope as the vestments, &c., are tossed down.* EWBANK *picks up a chasuble and holds it out derisively.*

EWBANK.

See this red rag! And they call themselves ministers of Christ His Gospel. (*Shakes chasuble before* THOMAS.) See here, sir! Did Christ or His apostles wear such things?

THOMAS.

Christ, too, was stripped of His garments.

EWBANK.

Not such garments as these, you fool!

THOMAS.

And was betrayed by Judas into the hands of sinners. Where is Judas, sir?

EWBANK (*tossing chasuble down*).

Bah!

OUTLAW.

But the man seems vanished altogether.

[*He looks round.*

BOWES.

You must look in my lady's chamber. Leave those trinkets, Outlaw. We must have him if we hunt all day. (*He goes across to door* (R.), *and raps on it with his whip.*) Coming in, my lady, coming in. (*Pause. He tries door; it is locked—shakes it.*) Do you hear, my lady? (*Listens.*) What! you swear he is not in there? That is for us to see. What! you will not open? (*Turns.*) Here, you fellows, break me in this door.

[*Two come across and begin to wrench.*

THOMAS.

I swear to you he is not there.

OUTLAW.

Then where is he, you knave? (THOMAS *is silent.*) There, enough. Beat it in. Stand by in case he makes a rush for it!

[*Door is forced. Exeunt tumultuously* BOWES, OUTLAW, *and two men.* EWBANK *remains, turning over vestments. A silence follows.*

BOWES (*without*).

By what warrant? Why, warrant enough! Here is a justice, and we have a minister outside. There, search, men. [*A sound of tapping and trampling begins.*

EWBANK (*going to door* (R.), *and looking through it*).

There, you fellows, in that dark corner, by the chest.

OUTLAW (*after a pause*).

Where, sir?

EWBANK.

There. [*Points.*

OUTLAW.

Why, yes. Beat it in! Beat it in! . . . By the mass, we have him! [*Great noise.*

BOWES (*without*).

By God! it's empty. The bird's flown!

[*Voices clamouring.*

Re-enter (R.) OUTLAW, BOWES, *and men.* BOWES *turns on threshold.*

BOWES.

Dress yourself, my lady; you will have to ride with us, presently.

[*He shuts door. All come forward to the hearth with* EWBANK.

BOWES (*furiously*).

There is some trick. By the Mass, they shall pay for it! He's flown.

THOMAS.

Aha, you cunning wolves! I told you there was no priest there.

OUTLAW.

It's one of their cursed oubliettes. He's off, a mile away by now, I dare swear.

BOWES.

I tell you no. He was here half-an-hour ago. Why, he said Mass.

EWBANK.

Yes, he did. He must be here, I tell you. Eglesfield said——

THOMAS.

Eglesfield, Eglesfield! Why——

EWBANK.

Silence, you hound. Here, gentlemen.

[*They confer in whispers.*

THOMAS.

Judas! Judas!

BOWES (*steps forward and cuffs him*).

Silence, I tell you. (*He turns to others.*) Yes, yes, it must be so. Here, you fellow.

[*Beckons to a man, whispers; man nods assent, and exit* (L.).

OUTLAW.

He's here, I'll swear to it.

[*The three stand in silence, staring about them.* THOMAS *glares, wrenching his head to* L.

Enter suddenly (L.), EGLESFIELD, *set and determined, followed by a man.*

THOMAS (*struggling*).

Judas! Judas! Ah, Judas!

[*Howls at him till he is gagged.*

BOWES.

Gag that fellow. (*A man does so.*) Never mind him, Mr. Eglesfield, you must finish this for us; we have searched everywhere.

EWBANK.

You have done your duty loyally, sir. Now you must help us to make an end.

EGLESFIELD (*nodding towards* THOMAS).

Take that fellow out. I cannot bear——

BOWES.

Oh! never mind him, sir; we have no time to waste.

EGLESFIELD (*in low voice*).

Where are the others?

BOWES (*impatiently*).

Oh! they are under guard. My lady is dressing. Now, sir.

EGLESFIELD (*still uneasily*).

You have searched everywhere?

BOWES *and* OUTLAW.

Everywhere.

[EGLESFIELD *looks round slowly; avoiding* THOMAS, *he points to stairs.*

EGLESFIELD.

Have you looked there?

BOWES.

Yes, yes.

EGLESFIELD.

In my lady's room? There was a hiding-place there.

"The night is come! the men are at the gates!"

BOWES.

Yes, yes, we found it. He was not there.

EGLESFIELD (*looking at chimney breast, then craftily at* THOMAS).

There? [*All turn and look.*

OUTLAW.

There! Why, that would not hold a rat. (*He raps on it with his whip.*) By God, though, it rings hollow.

[*The men crowd up.* THOMAS *shifts in agony.*

BOWES.

Bah! Why, no man could lie there.

[*He steps on hearth, and looks up chimney.*

OUTLAW (*still beating*).

Here, men, fetch bars, beat this in.

[*They do so and wait.*

EWBANK.

Why, surely——

BOWES.

I scarcely know. There seems room.

OUTLAW.

Here, men. (*They begin to look at chimney.* THOMAS *struggles, loosening ropes.* OUTLAW *urges and directs the*

men. Suddenly the wall gives.) Quietly, men. (*He thrusts in his hand.*) Why, there's a great space here!

[*The men work again; a panel falls.* BOST *appears in opening; makes sign of Cross slowly, smiling. All cry out.* THOMAS *wrenches himself free, and falls on knees, moaning under the gag. One leaps to* THOMAS *and holds him by shoulder.*

BOST (*smiling*).

Why, Thomas! (*As men leap to seize him.*) Have done then, men. You have me safe. You have made good your *boast!* Stand clear! (*He prepares to jump; suddenly sees* EGLESFIELD.) Why, Eglesfield! have they taken you too? (EGLESFIELD *turns away uneasily.*) No? Then what do you do here? (BOST *sees* EWBANK.) A minister, too! Why—Henry Ewbank! Old Knave of Clubs! My friend!! My old friend!!!

CURTAIN.

TABLEAU

SCENE.—*The Tower Torture-room.* (R.) *back, a staircase disappearing. On floor* (R.), *back, the rack laid on floor. Centre middle, a post. On this hangs* BOST *by wrists in manacles. Round him stand officials, one or two holding candles. One at a table with paper and ink, looking.* ANTONY MAYOR, *who is apostate, is looking at him with terror. Jailers standing by rack. Instruments of torture on walls. A fire burning* (L.), *with bars protruding.*

I

O Father! see the cross on high
  Thy patient servant hangs upon!
  Look down and see how all is done
By model of the agony
  And passion of Thine only Son.

II

O Lamb of God! Who bled for men,
  Look down in mercy, look and see;
  Remember what men did to Thee,
And see how they renew again
  The shame and pain of Calvary

COLL... OAKLAND, CAL...

III

Come, Holy Ghost! as long ago,
And look on him who surely saith
"My soul is sorrowful to death,"
And breathe athwart his bitter woe
The sweet refreshment of Thy Breath.

IV

O Angels! who in wilderness
And garden nerved His failing limb,
Whose Heart was sick, Whose Eyes were dim,
Come! succour in his sore distress
This child of man and strengthen him.

V

O Mary! stand by him, since thou
Another Cross didst stand beside;
And for the sake of Him who died
Strengthen and comfort, speed him now
And keep him in his passiontide.

Consummatum est.

ACT III

Before the curtain rises, there is sung:—

The Saviour led them through the rolling sea,
From bitter death He rescued them:
They nailed Him to a tree
Without Jerusalem.

The Saviour gave them drink and heavenly meat,
And brought them through the barren wild:
They nailed His hands and feet
And pierced the Undefiled.

So through all ages treading as He trod,
So fare Christ's servants one and all:
Who give the Wine of God
Drink vinegar and gall.

The feet so sweet that carry nought but good,
And nought but heavenly tidings bear,
Are set upon a Rood
And nailèd there.

Curtain rises.

Bost: My lord, I die for my priesthood and the Catholic Faith.

ACT III

TIME.—*Nearly a year later. July 24th*, 1594.

SCENE.—*The Assize Court at Durham.*

(*As curtain rises, there are discovered four attendants arranging seats, pens, paper. From outside is a murmur of voices heard, occasional banging on central door.*)

FIRST ATTENDANT.

The folk seem sorely impatient to-day to see justice done. (*Shouts.*) Be still there.

SECOND ATTENDANT.

And they will see it, by the Mass. My lord will make an end to-day; and the gallows are up, I hear.

THIRD ATTENDANT.

There will be a mighty concourse to see him die, if so many run to see him condemned.

SECOND ATTENDANT.

Why, yes, and he will die to-day. He confessed plainly enough yesterday that he had been made priest; and they ask no more than that. And he absolved Swallowell too before them all!

FOURTH ATTENDANT.

My lord is very hot against the Popish priests.

FIRST ATTENDANT.

He may well be hot. They do seduce the people from their allegiance.

FOURTH ATTENDANT.

Bost denied that stoutly enough. He cried out woe to such as said that true obedience to the Queen and true religion could not stand well together.

THIRD ATTENDANT.

Yes, yes, he said so. They all say so.

FIRST ATTENDANT.

There were many concealed Papists here yesterday, I think, by the manner in which they crowded after him for his blessing.

COLLEG
OAKLAN

SECOND ATTENDANT.

He will give no more blessings after to-day, unless it is from Heaven; and he could scarce lift his hand, I saw, so much had they racked him.

THIRD ATTENDANT.

Swallowell near yielded yesterday. Why, he fell on his knees before the court. The Papists are generally bold enough.

FOURTH ATTENDANT.

They say they are bewitched. They go to death as to a marriage-feast. I warrant you John Bost will be merry enough to-day.

FIRST ATTENDANT.

He has little cause to be merry. He hath been in prison all but a year.

SECOND ATTENDANT.

He has been in the Tower, they say, till a week ago.

THIRD ATTENDANT.

That is true enough. They had him on the rack four times, and once hung up by his hands.

FOURTH ATTENDANT.

My lord of Durham made a fine discourse the first day of the assizes. He waxed very hot against the Papists.

FIRST ATTENDANT.

For my part, I think him no better than a cuckoo. I am all for the new religion; but I understand not what right he hath to the old buildings to bring up his young in. Let him build for himself, I say.

SECOND ATTENDANT.

And I like not his sitting on the bench with the others. It used not to be so. A spiritual man should not meddle with the shedding of blood.

THIRD ATTENDANT.

Hark to the tumult without. Do you think the prisoner is come?

FOURTH ATTENDANT.

He must be on his way by now, and my lords also.

THIRD ATTENDANT.

Well, is all done?

[*They finish arranging.* *Enter* CLERK.

CLERK.

Make haste, make haste. Is all done? My lords are coming.

FIRST ATTENDANT.

All is ready, sir. Shall we let the people in?

CLERK.

Why, yes, if all be ready. Keep a clear passage for the prisoner.

[*The* CLERK *goes to his seat and busies himself with papers. Then the door is opened, and people crowd in, talking, laughing, some grave. They crowd along behind the barrier, the two attendants directing and calling out, "Keep away there." The* CLERK *turns and nods to the attendants by door* (L.). *They open it. There is general confusion and noise, and attendants call for order as certain officials enter—lawyers, attorneys, clerks — these also talking and laughing. All, with their hats on, pass to their places, and sit and arrange papers. After a moment or two, during which first and second attendants exeunt by centre door, a trumpet is heard.* CLERK *rises, and with attendants calls out, "Order Order. Silence." The lawyers rise. Noise sinks to a murmur. Trumpet sounds again, nearer. Attendants fling open door* (L.).

CLERK (*beating on table*).

Order! order! My lords are coming.

[*Dead silence.*

Enter through door (L.) *first an usher, then a man bearing books. Then, after a pause,* Justice BEAUMONT *and* Lord EWINGES; the BISHOP OF DURHAM; *and after one more usher,* Lord HUNTINGDON. Justice BEAUMONT *and* Lord EWINGES *pass to their places;* the BISHOP *stands aside and bows.* Lord HUNTINGDON, *bowing, passes to central raised seat;* the BISHOP *follows him. All bow and remove their hats; the judges do the same. Then the judges sit: then the lawyers sit; the* CLERK *remains standing. Hats on again.*

CLERK.

Bring in the prisoner.

[*Confusion at door: cry is taken up outside. Third and fourth attendants push a way through to central door; keep back the crowd: door opens, and enter two attendants —first and second—and between them* JOHN BOST. *He walks, bowed and limping, with a stick, very slowly. Murmurs break out: two or three in crowd snatch at his hand to kiss it; are roughly pushed back.* JOHN BOST *turns as he comes through barrier and makes sign of the Cross. Many in crowd cross themselves; others snarl and growl. A crowd more forces its way in behind him.* JOHN BOST *is pulled on by attendants, crosses floor, bowing to judges, and passes up steps into dock. There he settles himself, crosses himself, and makes a*

bow again to the judges. CLERK, *lifting papers, reads. During this and through the scene, the judges often whisper together.*

CLERK.

My lords; gentlemen,—At the assize holden yesterday in this place John Bost did confess that he was an Englishman, born at Dufton, in the county of Westmoreland, that he travelled without licence beyond the seas, into foreign countries, and was there made priest by authority from the Bishop of Rome, since the first year of her Majesty's reign; that he returned and said Mass in England at the Waterhouse in the county of Durham, on the 10th day of September 1593, as well as at other places and at other times, contrary to her Majesty's laws, her crown and dignity, according to the indictment. Further, yesterday, John Ingram, seminary priest, and George Swallowell, schoolmaster, were found guilty of high treason towards her Grace and received sentence. [*Bows and sits.*

HUNTINGDON.

Ask the prisoner whether he can show cause why he should not die, since he has confessed to the indictment.

CLERK.

John Bost, hast thou anything to say why thou shouldst not die?

BOST.

My lords and gentlemen,—I confess again freely to the indictment. And, further, I am very glad that God has called me into this trial of my priesthood and profession; and I am very sorry that the laws of my beloved country are such as cannot concur with the Holy Catholic Faith.

HUNTINGDON.

See here, Bost, we want no such treasonous talk from you. There is treason enough already. If there were not more it would be enough to cast you that you have concealed the treason of others.

BOST.

When did I do that, my lord?

HUNTINGDON.

Why, you were at Arthington at a marriage, were you not?

BOST.

I was, my lord.

HUNTINGDON.

Well, it was there that Ballard told you of an invasion of England by the King of Spain—and it was that that you concealed. Even without your confession that would be enough. We have it all of Ballard's oath.

BOST.

My lord, I confess freely that I was at Arthington at that time, and that I spoke there with Mr. Ballard, and that Mr. Ballard spoke to me then of a pretended invasion.

HUNTINGDON.

Well, then, there was treason enough, since you did not disclose it.

BOST.

My lord, I reproved Mr. Ballard for it. I told him that he and I were priests; that it was our function to invade souls only; not to meddle with these temporal missions.

HUNTINGDON.

You concealed it. That is enough for us. You do not die for your religion but for mere treason.

BOST.

My lord, I protest against that. Whosoever doth charge me further in that, or in any other thing that is contained in my confession under mine own hand, he doth charge me untruly, be he a lord or whosoever: and I thought I had deserved no blame in that; for to tell every tale one heareth and that which one may tell, could not be warrant, and, if any such thing were, had been folly.

HUNTINGDON.

Nay, that is very well; but you did rejoice to hear it, and were very desirous to be made acquainted with the secrets

of the invasion; but if your treason had come to pass, where, then, had been Queen Elizabeth? (*all raise their hats*) whom I beseech God to preserve for ever and ever. No, sir, you die for treason, not for your pretended priesthood. Do not deceive yourself.

BOST.

My lord, I die for my priesthood and the Catholic Faith.

[*Murmur peals out from crowd.*

HUNTINGDON (*angrily*).

You do not die for what you call the Catholic Faith.

BOST (*smiling*).

Then I shall live long, my lord. [*Laughter in court.*

HUNTINGDON.

I tell you you do not. You die as a traitor to her Grace.

BOST.

Well, my lord, my Maker knows for what I shall die, and that is enough for me: for He is not only my Maker, but the Maker of that Catholic Faith as well.

[*Laughter in court. The Judges look angry. They whisper together. Cries of "Well spoken, priest!" "Well said!" "My lord, you have met your match!"*

CLERK (*rising*).

Order! Order! Silence!

BISHOP.

Bost, I have something to say to you.

BOST.

Yes, my lord?

BISHOP.

You took the oath of supremacy, did you not, in Queen's College, at Oxford?

BOST.

Yes, my lord.

BISHOP.

And you were made a minister, were you not?

BOST.

Yes, my lord.

BISHOP (*furiously*).

Very well, then. What more do we need? You are an apostate from Christ's Gospel, whereof you were made a minister; you are stained with perjury as well as with all your other crimes and treasons. You have been a lewd fellow, John Bost, and you should die for that if for nothing else.

BOST.

My lord, if all the lewd fellows died, where would be the company? [*Loud laughter.*

BISHOP (*rising*).

You cannot put us off with such mockery. You should think upon your sins, John Bost. [*Sits.*

BOST.

Ah! yes, my lord, that is true enough. *Infinite peccavi, miserere mei Deus.* I have sinned infinitely; I confess it; and I pray God mercy. Yet *Nunquam sera est ad bonos mores via.* That I did, sir, I confess freely, but that was when I took the oath, and was made a minister. (*Confusion breaks out in court; attendants cry out for silence.*) Because I once persecuted, therefore, according to your reasoning, I must persevere therein! St. Austin, if he was once a Manichee, yet he died a good Christian and a saint; and further, my lords——

BEAUMONT.

Be silent, sir, you have too much liberty of speech.

BOST.

My lord, if I may not speak, why are these questions put to me? I have confessed plainly to the indictment—that I was made priest beyond the seas and have said Mass in England. It is for that I was taken, and for that I will die.

OAKLAND, C

BISHOP.

Be silent, sir; it is not for that that you will die. You are a perjured fellow, for you swore to take orders after a time being in the College at Oxford; and you took them too.

BOST.

Bah! your orders of clergy were not known nor heard of when the statutes of the College were made.

[*Confusion breaks out again.*

EWINGES.

Silence, sir; you are not come here to preach or to seduce the people; but to plead your cause and to have justice done upon you.

BISHOP.

You gain nothing, sir, by reviling God's ministers.

BOST.

I do not revile God's ministers, my lord, but only such as call themselves so.

BISHOP.

You say I am no minister, sir?

BOST.

No, my lord, you are but one of the Queen's making and your own. Now, no man taketh this office unto himself, as the Apostle teaches us.

BISHOP (*furiously*).

Sir, we do not want your sermons.

BOST.

Very well, my lord, then do you do the preaching. I know well enough what the text will be. For me, I have preached enough in this world, and desire no more of it.

HUNTINGDON.

And you have nothing else to say, sir?

BOST.

No, my lord.

HUNTINGDON.

Then I know not why you have detained us so long. It is true that sentence must be given upon you as an Englishman who has been made priest beyond the seas and has said Mass within the realm of England, as well as absolved and reconciled to your Pope subjects of her Majesty the Queen (*raise hats*), whom I pray God preserve: but it is because in your religion all treason is contained. That matter at Arthington is but one example of it; your taking of the oath and your perjury in breaking it, is another; and it is for these fruits of your religion that you die, rather than for your religion itself; since the Queen will oppress no man's conscience so long as he keep it to himself. You are a traitorous and unfaithful subject to her Majesty,

Very slowly, Bost passes out....

John Bost; you have been within this realm for a great many years, striving to make others like yourself; but, by God's mercy, you have been laid by the heels at last, and you will practise your treasons no more.

The sentence of the court is that you be conveyed hence to the place from which you came, and from there be drawn to the place of execution upon hurdles; that you there be hanged by the neck till you are half-dead; that you be cut down alive; that your heart be taken from your body and burnt in your view; that your head be severed from your body; that your body be divided into four quarters, and your quarters be at the Queen's disposal. And may the God of infinite mercy be merciful to your soul.

A Voice.

Amen. [*Confusion and murmurs in the crowd.*

Bost.

Deo gratias! [*Signing himself with the Cross.*

Clerk.

Remove the prisoner.

[*Two attendants come forward. The crowd surges about.* Bost *descends slowly, with his stick, from the dock, and comes across the floor; he is taken by the arms; turns and bows to the judges, passes on. The crowd break through the gates of the barrier to meet him; half-a-dozen fall upon their*

knees; the judges stand up and gesticulate. Noise very great. Others behind barriers shake their fists and shout. Cries of "God bless you, sir," "Give us your blessing, sir," and "Away with the traitor," "To death with the traitor." Those on their knees seize his hands and kiss them; attendants beat and struggle; finally, very slowly, BOST *passes out, making the sign of the Cross on all sides.*

CURTAIN.

TABLEAU

In centre of stage, towards back, the gallows; cross-bar and two uprights. Against bars leans a ladder. Standing on this is JOHN BOST, *with rope round neck. He wears a skull-cap, coif turned up, embroidered with* JESU. *He faces crowd as if to speak. In background rises smoke and red light. On cross-bar an executioner, holding ladder. Two ministers, one of them* EWBANK, *stand at foot with Bibles, staring up. A great crowd on all sides, some kneeling, some with covered faces.*

I

Go in the Name of Him who fashioned thee,
Who gave thee nerve and limb!
Go in His Love which so empassioned thee
To die for Him!
Mount up and hear thy Master's kindly word:
"Well done! thou faithful servant of the Lord!"

II

Go in the Name of Him who died for thee,
Who loved thee last and first!
Go to the sight of Him who cried for thee,
"Behold! I thirst."
By grace a victor! By that very grace
Pass to the glory of thy Saviour's Face.

III

Go in His Name who once came down on thee,
And still His gifts increased!
Go in His Power who set the crown on thee
And made thee priest!
Go! martyr-priest, victorious and alone
To take thy greater crown of precious stone.

IV

Go in the Name of all who pray for thee,
Of flaming Seraphim,
Of scar-crowned martyrs who make way for thee,
And Cherubim!
Go in their Name, and by the help of them,
To find thy dwelling in Jerusalem.

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